(b) if so, what were the causes of the fire and the extent of damage to the goods and the building in which the godown is located; and

(c) whether any lapse in the fire prevention as also fire-fighting arrangements by the fire brigade have come to the notice of the Government; if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the Delhi Police, the fire occurred due to the negligence of the Management. The damage caused is reported to be about Rs. 15 lakhs.

(c) No inbuilt fire safety measures had been provided in the premises. The fire was brought under control within a reasonable time. However, some difficulty was experienced due to non-availability of water in the water storage tank of the building.

Barbed wire fencing on Bangladesh border

205. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what progress has so far been made in erecting a barbed wire fencing along the Bangladesh border to check infiltration into the country;

(b) whether the construction of a road along the Indo-Bangladesh border has been taken up; and

(c) whether any time schedule has been fixed for the completion of the border road and erection of the barbed wire fencing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) Survey work for erection of barbed wire fence has been taken up in Assam and Meghalaya sectors of the Indo-Bangladesh border along with survey for construction of roads. The field survey has almost been completed in Assam sector. The work of erection of barbed wire fence will be taken up sector-wise after construction of roads.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The project of construction of roads/fence along Indo-Bangladesh border will be taken up in two phases and each phase is likely to take about five years.

Military assistance to Sri Lanka by foreign countries

206. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that certain countries have offered military assistance to the Government of Sri Lanka in the wake of India's action in airdropping humanitarian aid over the Jaffna Peninsula;

(b) if so, what are the names of the countries and other details thereof; and

(c) whether there have been any positive results of India's action in airdropping humanitarian aid over the Jaffna Peninsula?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) and (b) Government has seen reports to this effect. According to Press reports, the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister had mentioned China and Pakistan. Other details are not confirmed.

(c) Yes, Sir. The aid helped meet the essential and urgent needs of the people of Jaffna.